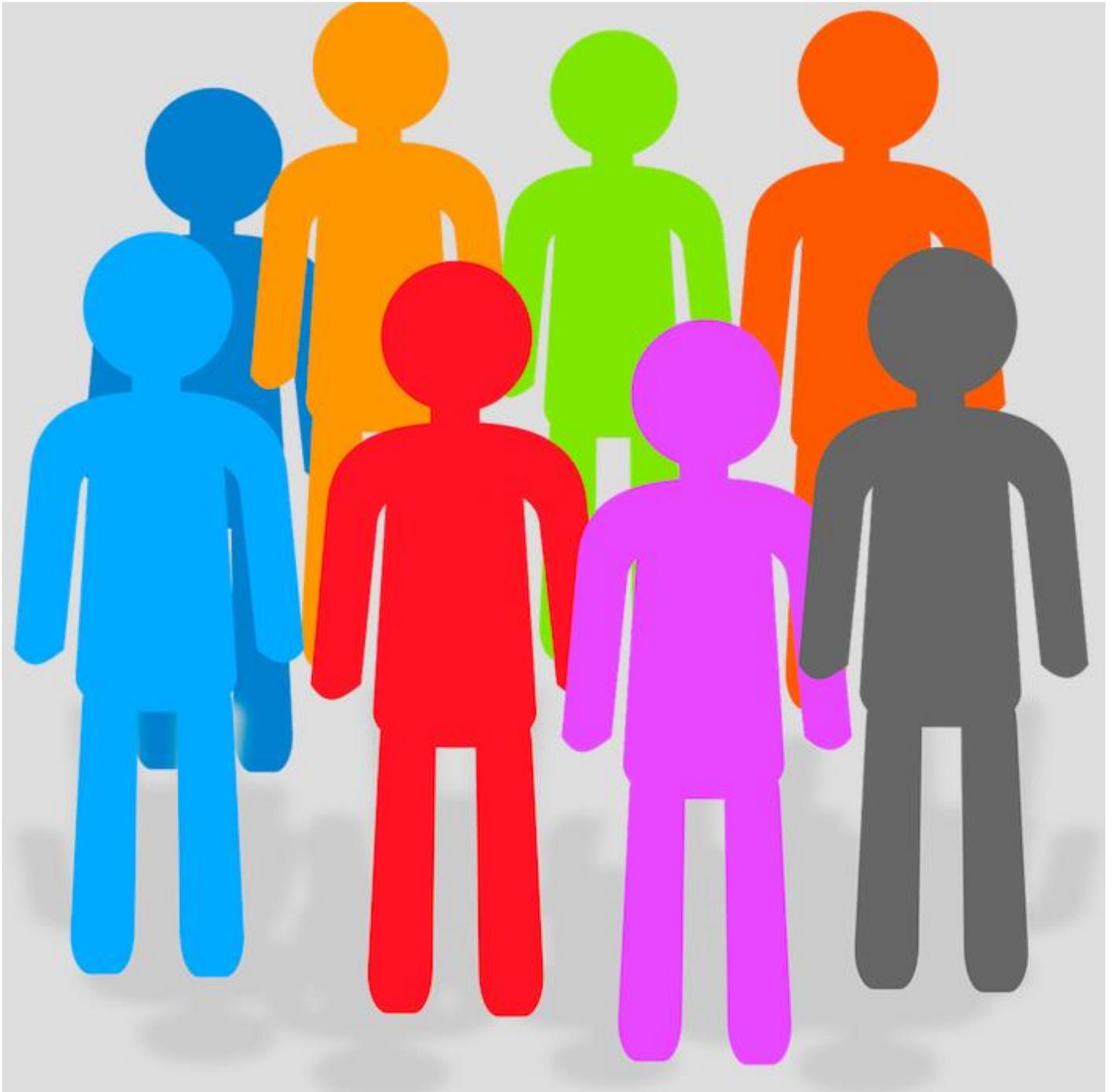


Putting it into Practice

Lessons, guidance and resources for an active and principled classroom



Sample Writing Skills Lesson
Society and Culture

Writing Skills – Society and Culture

Main aim: for students to develop their ability to write a for and against essay on the topic of a societal problem, and to practise going through the process of planning, drafting and correcting

Subsidiary aim: for students to be better able to use discourse markers to bring cohesion to their essay

Level: Upper Intermediate

Lesson length: 75 - 90 mins

Materials:

Handouts 1 + 2

Lesson plan

Timing and interaction	Stage name and aim	Procedure
10 mins T – Ss S – S S – S T - Ss	<p>Lead-in and set task</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to generate interest in the topic and ideas - to get students speaking in English early in the lesson - to ensure students know the purpose of the lesson 	<p><i>Today you are going to write a for and against essay. But first you will read an example.</i></p> <p><i>The essay question in the example is; ‘Monitoring citizens using CCTV is an essential tool in keeping our cities safe in today’s world. To what extent do you agree?’</i></p> <p>Put students in pairs. Tell half the pairs they will think of arguments <i>for</i> the use of CCTV and the other half <i>against</i>. Give out one piece of paper per pair and tell them they have 4 minutes to write down all their arguments.</p> <p>When time is up get them to swap papers with a pair from the opposite side. They should read their ideas and see if they can add any. Then give the paper back to the original pair to read.</p> <p>Quick open class feedback – what were some of the things that were added to your paper?</p>
5 mins T – Ss S S – S Ss - T	<p>Model</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - to show students an example of the kind of thing they will write later - to practise reading quickly for overall understanding 	<p><i>Now let’s see an example answer to this essay question. (Hold up essay.)</i></p> <p><i>Read it quickly and see how many of your ideas it mentions.</i></p> <p>Pair-check / discuss.</p> <p>Quick open class feedback. Did we get the same? Are there any ideas we didn’t have?</p>
3 mins T – Ss S – S	<p>Focus on layout</p>	<p><i>Now let’s look at the organisation of the essay. Answer question 2 with your partner.</i> (Handout 1, Task 2)</p>

<p>T - Ss</p>	<p>- for students to identify an appropriate way to organise their essay and understand the purpose of particular paragraphs</p>	<p>Quick open class feedback.</p>
<p>10 mins T – Ss S S – S Ss – T T – Ss S S – S Ss – T - Ss</p>	<p>Focus on language</p> <p>- for students to identify language chunks they can use to organise their essay and to understand when to use it.</p>	<p><i>Now let's look at some language that helps us structure and link parts of the essay.</i> (Hold up Handout 2, show Task 1)</p> <p><i>Put one of the headings / reasons for using the language in the correct box at the top of the table.</i></p> <p>Students complete then pair-check.</p> <p>Open class feedback.</p> <p><i>Now look at more examples of some language we can use. Which box does it go in? Add the examples to the table.</i> (Handout 2, Task 2)</p> <p>Students complete individually and then check in pairs – Teacher monitors.</p> <p>Open class feedback. (Optional - here you could see if you can elicit any more useful examples from the class in any of the boxes.)</p>
<p>5-8 mins T – Ss S</p>	<p>Planning and preparation</p> <p>- for students to get their ideas together and begin to organise them - to develop their ability to plan before writing</p>	<p><i>Now it's your turn to use what you have done this lesson to write your own essay.</i> <i>First – choose one of the questions below and make notes on your ideas for and against.</i></p> <p>Students make notes – teacher monitors and feeds in help / language where needed.</p>
<p>15-20 mins T – Ss S</p>	<p>Drafting</p> <p>- for students to practise putting their ideas together, linking them and structuring their essay</p>	<p>When students have decided and made notes:</p> <p><i>Now use your notes to write your essay. You have 15 minutes.</i></p> <p>Students write – Teacher monitors, taking notes.</p>
<p>10 mins T – Ss S S – S</p>	<p>Feedback</p> <p>- for students to receive useful information they can apply to their re-write</p>	<p>Peer feedback Put students into pairs (ideally with someone who is answering the same question as them).</p>

<p>T - Ss</p>	<p>- to develop the skill of assessing using criteria</p>	<p>Read your partner's essay and answer the questions (Show them Handout 3) – tell him or her what is good and what they can improve. (Give out handout 3.)</p> <p>When students have read and commented: Teacher feedback Highlight anything you think students need help with – this could be grammatical errors, not using a range of discourse markers, paragraphing etc. Include highlighting of positive points.</p>
<p>7-8 mins T – Ss S</p>	<p>Editing and re-writing - to practise re-writing, proofreading and editing</p>	<p>Now use the information from me and from your partner to re-write / make any changes to your essay.</p> <p>Students write – teacher monitors.</p>
<p>5-8 mins T – Ss S T - Ss</p>	<p>Feedback - for students to have a sense of conclusion - to compare their ideas / work with others'</p>	<p>Put students into new pairs. Read your new partners essay – do you agree with their conclusion? Open class feedback – elicit ideas / opinions about the topics and bring the lesson to a close.</p>



1. Read the essay and see how many of the points you discussed are mentioned.

Monitoring citizens using CCTV is an essential tool in keeping our cities safe in today's world. To what extent do you agree?

There are many arguments in favour of the use of CCTV when considering how we might maintain our safety and security as a society. However, it has also been said that the use of CCTV presents its own dangers to society. To what extent do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages? This essay will seek to answer this question.

Many people claim that CCTV is a necessary evil in the modern world. General crime and terrorism are both growing, as is the population. These factors make it increasingly difficult for the police to manage our security in more traditional ways; such as patrolling areas and talking with the public. One CCTV operator can view several areas at once, and it could therefore be argued that CCTV is both more efficient and more effective. Another relevant point in support of CCTV, is that seeing cameras provides the public with a feeling of security. Additionally, it may help reduce crime, as the sight of the cameras may make criminals think twice.

There are of course contrasting arguments to the ones above. For example, some people worry that governments are using CCTV as a way to cut the costs of having real police officers on our streets. Furthermore, it is not clear what happens to images from CCTV; we have no control over who has them or what they do with them. It has been claimed that CCTV is reducing our privacy and that it may be used as a way for governments to spy on citizens.

To sum up, although the increased use of CCTV may seem like the answer to our security problems, there are perhaps as many concerns as there are advantages. For CCTV to be a positive force, it needs to be used carefully and under strict guidelines, otherwise it will create as many problems as it solves.

2. Read again and answer the questions.

How many paragraphs are there?

What is the purpose of each paragraph?

1. Look at the phrases from the essay. Put the meaning / use of the phrases in the correct place in the top of the table.

- contrasting
- giving examples
- introducing / adding points
- concluding
- Introducing the topic / stating purpose

<p>There are many arguments in favour of...</p> <p>This essay will seek to...</p>	<p>however...</p> <p>although...</p>	<p>Many people claim that...</p> <p>it could therefore be argued that...</p> <p>It has been claimed that...</p> <p>Another relevant point in support of...is...</p> <p>Additionally...</p> <p>Furthermore...</p>	<p>such as...</p> <p>for example,...</p>	<p>To sum up...</p>

2. Now look at the phrases below and add them to the correct column.

- a) In spite of + noun / gerund
- b) According to + person / organisation
- c) Another factor to consider is...
- d) For instance...
- e) In addition...
- f) The following essay will...

3. Choose one of the titles below.

Those who don't work shouldn't receive money from the government.

Education should be single sex.

Social media is having a negative effect on our society.

Use the questions to help you assess your partner's essay.

1. Does the essay focus on the question and answer it?
2. How many paragraphs are there?
3. Does each paragraph have an appropriate purpose?
4. Has the writer used helpful phrases to introduce and link points in the essay?
5. Is the writer's conclusion clear?
6. Are there any errors?
7. Which words or phrases do you like?

Answers – Handout 1

Task 2

How many paragraphs are there? 4

What is the purpose of each paragraph? 1- introduction, 2 – arguments in favour of CCTV, 3 – arguments against CCTV, 4 – conclusion.

Answers – Handout 2

Introducing the topic / stating purpose	contrasting	introducing / adding points	giving examples	concluding
<p>There are many arguments in favour of...</p> <p>This essay will seek to...</p> <p>The following essay will...</p>	<p>however... although...</p> <p>In spite of + noun / gerund</p>	<p>Many people claim that... it could therefore be argued that... It has been claimed that... Another relevant point in support of...is... Additionally... Furthermore...</p> <p>According to + person / organisation</p> <p>Another factor to consider is...</p> <p>In addition...</p>	<p>such as... for example... for instance...</p>	<p>To sum up...</p>

